



COSTAGUANA

(+ EFGIART)



Volume 10, Number 7

27th July 1985

This is COSTAGUANA (what, you expected THE SMITHSONIAN?), a journal of postal Diplomacy and ill-timed idiocy foisted upon you by the Saxon Business Machines Co., in coöperation with Conrad F. von Metzke, 4374 Donald Ave., San Diego, CA 92117-3813. 'Phones: Home (619) 276-2937, before 10 p.m. Office (619) 566-2170 or 566-2190, but only if you have no choice, please. Game fees \$7 to newcomers, \$3 to current readers; see Page 4 for information on game openings. Subscriptions 22c per copy; subscribe for as long as you wish. Trades encouraged, please make noises.

STEVE CARTIER

With this set of moves, one of the grand old players in these games, Steve Cartier, is leaving us for better climes and more noble pursuits. It is with a deep and abiding sense of loss that I bid him adieu, and wish him well.

Steve actually preceded me into postal Diplomacy; in fact, he's directly responsible for my being involved in this hobby, as it was through his (long defunct) publication WILD 'N' WOOLY that I first learned of postal play of this game. That was in 1965, and though we've all gone through huge changes in twenty years, Steve has never left the hobby whatever his upheavals.

For most of the twenty years, Steve and I have lived but a couple of hours apart, and yet we've only met three times. Once was at one of the innumerable science-fiction conventions held in this part of the world (Steve came to Diplomacy the same way that most of the 'founders' did, through fandom). Once was because I specifically imposed myself on his presence, and even stayed at his house a night. (Keeping in mind that I'm 6'8" tall, I drove that day - in a tiny English Ford - from San Diego to San Luis Obispo, about 300 miles, and then back to Los Angeles to meet Steve. He was kind enough to literally pry me out of the car....) The third was at a sci-fi party held at the Pelz' home, during which some screwball drove by and fired a rifle through the window (narrowly missing Dian Pelz).

I've long since dropped out of fandom, though Steve hasn't. And it has been many years since I've seen him (he came to town once recently, and called me; unfortunately, he picked a day when the kids were violently ill, and I just couldn't see him. I've felt horribly guilty ever since....)

Through the years, Steve and I have played in each others' games, we've comiserated on failed marriages and personal trauma, we've shared some glorious s-f convention moments, and we've had some of the world's greatest mutual friends (Castora, Alderson, Cline, Pournelle, Jeffrey, McDaniel, Harness, Pelz....). Circumstances and geography may have kept us from being close, but the intent was always there, and no matter where he goes or what he does, I want it on record that Steve Cartier has meant something to me for twenty years, and will continue to matter to me even if, God forbid, I never hear from him again....

Let this issue of COSTAGUANA be dedicated to Charles G. "Dan" Brannan, alias Steve Cartier: One of the great people this hobby has seen, and one of the nicest human beings it has ever been my privilege to cross paths with.

Please come back some day, Dan. And until then, PLEASE be happy.

THE DIPLOMACY SET IS HERE! Shortly after the last issue was released, Doug Beyerlein telephoned; would I, he asked, be interested in buying one of his? Good ol' Doug. Typical ol' Doug. He's out of the hobby now, so we can't count on him to bail us out of crises or problems any more. Right? Sure it's right; that's why the long-distance 'phone call and the arrival of the game set a week later.

Not only is it a nice game set, it's also an old game set: The Games Research variety, with the real map and the little wooden pieces. And it's the Canadian edition, so now I have the rules in both English and French. Whee.....

One thing, though; postal Diplomacy is mentioned (with an address of a contact person) on a flyer inside the box; but only in the French text! I wonder why the English version omitted the data....

Thank you, Douglas, my friend. You've saved these players from further adjudicational screw-ups, I hope....

And thanks to several others - Michael Keller, Larry Peery and Keith Sherwood - and Lu Henry too - come to mind as having offered sources. (Hey Keith: THE GAME KEEPER was a nice idea, but they're the ones that wanted advance payment against a 2-3 mo. delivery.)

IT SADDENS ME a little to see a sudden rash of players dropping by the wayside. But perhaps it's beginning to make some sense (see onward and a massive letter from Ken Peel). Did the big gap over Christmas sour a few of you?

I have the germ of an idea, and I'd be interested in reactions. Suppose I were to appoint a volunteer 'player representative,' whose job it would be to question (on behalf of all players) any undue publishing lapse, and take action to move the games if the investigation failed to satisfy. I would deposit some money with the volunteer as insurance against any expenses he might incur. Any thoughts?

THE RUNESTONE POLL, being a popularity rating of Diplomacy journals and their gamesmasters, has just been received, courtesy of Bruce Linsey. I have to confess that I've always been suspicious of these hobby polls; they've always struck me as a little silly; but I must further confess that, this time, Bruce has captured my interest. In the first place, he has accumulated a massive voting sample: 265 votes were cast, the largest voting sample in the hobby's history. In the second place, he has released the in-depth votes and analysis in a 56-page tome of astounding breadth. Bruce is charging \$2 a copy (only \$1 if you voted in the poll), and I am hard-pressed to think of a better bargain for a fan of this hobby. Bruce is at 73 Ashuelot, #3, Dalton, MA 01226-1403.

COSTAGUANA didn't do terribly well, but I'm sure there are good reasons for that. If I were a player and my publisher disappeared over Christmas, I'd vote the sucker down too! We are in Position 44 out of 71, with a score of 5.29 on a scale of 10. In other words, just about a C-minus.

Obviously I have work to do....

One of the things one might do to improve one's score is, of course, to print the ballot, encourage readers to vote, and show a little interest. I regret that I did not do so this time; I had no idea Bruce's efforts would turn out to be so spectacular. However, I'll be involved next year....

NINE-DIGIT ZIP CODES: From now on, all players and subscribers will have their copies addressed with their full "ZIP + 4" code; nine digits. I have had my mailing list encoded and will use it from here on.

There are those who think this ZIP + 4 business is idiotic. So did I, at first - until I, as a postal employee, saw the first tangible results. If major mailers would take the trouble to change over, the postal service (and, in the long run, the postal customer, big or small) would save a real bundle! Nine-digit mail just whizzes right through; employee handling and time spent in intermediate staging operations is drastically reduced; and the result is far superior service at far lower cost.

For a small 'personal' mailer like me, the impact on the system is, obviously, insignificant. But I set myself up as an example. For example, I have been writing my ZIP + 4 code when paying all my bills; as of now, five out of perhaps a dozen monthly billers have picked it up.

I ask you to use the code yourselves; it's a beginning toward saving some real postal money. I will also volunteer to encode any Diplomacy mailing list that is sent me (I can't tell you how to do it yourselves, because the toll-free number I use is an in-house one.) It takes about one minute per name to do it my way, and I can spend a half-hour a day. Please judge return time accordingly.

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"Hi. I'm a Californian, and I'd like to replace Deaver, Meese, or Clark."

OF THE FIVE GAMES going in these pages now, one is going to end fairly soon and a second will likely follow quickly. I have therefore applied to the Orphan Games Honcho to see if he has any games needing homes. Depending on his response, COSTAGUANA will have game openings in new, original games: At least one, and possibly two. If current players/readers are interested, please advise.

Fees are \$7 to new recipients, \$3 to current ones. The fee includes a sub to the magazine for as long as the game lasts, providing of course that you don't drop out.

For now, I'm offering these games only to readers and their contacts; in other words, publishers please do not announce. Once the question of orphans is settled, then we'll go public if appropriate.

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AN INTERESTING DOCUMENT has come my way. It is, in fact, the inside of a cigarette carton. The manufacturer, in a short essay that is obviously a desperation play by a troubled industry, has taken up the cudgel for the 'rights of smokers.' "Every day anti-smoking groups are lobbying to take the rights of smokers away - and they are succeeding. More and more restrictions are being put on the smoker's freedom of choice....

"Where has individual freedom gone when the government dictates where or when you can enjoy a cigarette?...write to your lawmakers and let them know how you feel about being singled out as a social and economic target...."

Amazing. Or...on second thought, maybe not. There are lobbyists active on behalf of industries that pour chemical wastes into the rivers; why not start a movement on behalf of an industry that charges third parties money to pour pollutants into the air? How about a lobbyist on behalf of drunk drivers; isn't it, after all, my individual right to get soused and drive down the wrong side of the highway at seventy-five miles an hour?

Here's an idea. Right now, your taxes pay huge subsidies to the tobacco growers. How about we attach a rider to the next appropriations bill that gives the industry five years to use some of the money to diversify? After that, you can still grow tobacco, but not with any help from Uncle Sucker!

;; ;;

'TIS GAME TIME!

1984HI - THE EXTROVERTED EMU - Fall 1904

AUSTRIA (Pierce): a ank-arm. a smy (s) ank-arm. a mun (h). a vie-tri.
a rum-bul. a gal-ukr. a con-bul. f aeg-ion.

ENGLAND (Johnston): f iri-wal. f lon-yor. f nwg-nwy.

FRANCE (Fleming): a ven-tri. a mar-pie. a pic-wal. f mid (s) eng. f wes-tun. f tyn-ion. f eng (c) pic-wal.

GERMANY (Walker): a ruh (s) bur-mun. a bur-mun. a war-gal. a sil-ber.
f hol-kie. f den-kie. f edi (h). f swe-nwy.

ITALY: a apu, f nap (h).

RUSSIA (Cartier): f bot-swe.

TURKEY (Sherwood): a mos-sev. a sev-rum. f bla (s) sev-rum.

Retreats: Aus a rum to bud, ser, or o.t.b.; Aus a mun to sil, boh, tyo or o.t.b.

CENTERS:

A: vie, bud, tri, ser, gre, bul, con, smy, ank (9). Build one.

E: lon, lvp, stp (3). Even.

F: par, bre, mar, spa, por, ven, rom, tun (8). Build one.

It strikes me that this is the perfect time to pick up a little speed. I'm willing to honor grumbles, but if none are forthcoming, then I'm asking for retreats, adjustments, and Spring 1905 moves all at once next time. The deadline is Saturday, August 17, 1985.

PARIS TO MOSCOW: "East is East and West is West
 "And never the twain shall meet
 "Except when...."

MARSEILLES TO PIRATES OF THE HANSE: Sorry, Conrad says that there no longer exists an East.

PARIS: Sorry, I can't think of any appropriate Orson Welles quote for this season.

[illegible]

Looks like I saved last issue's gamesmastering flubs (my last, but you may occasionally want to check anyway) for this one. The English order of Sweden and the German order for Poland should have been underlined. And the retreating Russian unit also had an opt to Silesia.

Oh well, no big deal, because all relevant parties acted on the correct information, not on my version.

ENGLAND (R.Anderson): a den-lon. a pic-par. f nat-lvp. f cly (s) nat-lvp.
f nth (c) den-lon. f swe-den. f eng-bre.

FRANCE (Rauterberg): a wal (s) iri-lvp. f iri-lvp.

GERMANY (Keller): a mun (h). f hol- bel.

ITALY (D.Anderson): a gre (s) tri-ser. a bel (s) GER hol. a vie-bud. a gal-
rum. a tri-ser. f nap-ion. f alb (s) gre. f spa sc (h). f mid-bre.
f lyo-tyn. f ion-aeg.

RUSSIA (Egli): a kie-mun. a war-gal. a boh-tyo. a sil (s) kie-mun. f ber-kie.

TURKEY (Touchette): a rum-ser. a ser-gre. a bul (s) ser-gre. f eas-ion.
f bla-rum. f aeg (s) ser-gre.

Boy, that would have been fun trying to do in my head....

Okay, so who gets kicked out? Poor Turkish army Serbia...back in the box you go, li'l feller. And the German army Munich must flee for its life, and may find sanctuary in Berlin, Bohemia, Burgundy, Ruhr, or may simply opt to go blooey.

CENTRES :

E: lon, lvp, edi, par, den, nwy, swe (7). Even.

F: bre (1). Remove one.

G: hol, (ber) (1 or 2). Remove one or even.

I: ven, rom, nap, vie, tri, bud, ser, gre, tun, mar, spa, por, bel (13).

Build two.

R: mos, stp, war, kie, mun, (ber) (5 or 6). Even or build one.

T: con, smy, ank, sev, bul, rum (6). Build one.

Adjustments may be conditional on retreats - in a couple of cases, they obviously must be - and both are due Saturday, August 17, 1985.

Also - I have a proposal to declare the game a draw, Eng-Ita-Rus-Tur. Votes next time please; one 'no' kills it; votes not cast count as 'yes.'

WARSAW: Beer will be imported from Munich this fall!

JAMUL: Fine, but might I suggest taking the southern route?

[illegible]

HEY, CLASSICAL MUSIC LOVERS! How about that new record that just came out?

"DIRTY MUSIC"

Selections by Blow, Suk, Gay, Fux and Scheidt, all sung by baritone Erich Kunz? Think it might make the charts? (Or will the charts make it!?)

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Game 1985AJ - THE TERGIVERSATORY TAPIR - Winter 1902

AUSTRIA (Walters): Builds a tri. Has: a's gre, ser, bud, tri, vie (5).

ENGLAND (Fleming): Removes f lon. Has: a ruh; f's nth, wes (3).

FRANCE (Walker): Has: a's par, gas, mar; f's pic, por (5).

GERMANY (Caruso): Builds a ber. Has: a's den, bel, sil, pru, ber; f kie (6).

ITALY (Pustilnik): Has: a's ven, tyo; f's adr, ion (4).

RUSSIA (Brown): Builds a stp. Has: a's bul, rum, arm, war, stp; f's bla, con, swe (8).

TURKEY (Cartier): Has: a ank; f aeg (2).

Note that Steve Cartier has resigned. I do have Spring orders on file for him, and will use them and make his resignation effective next time. If a volunteer wishes to come forward and play the position, fine; otherwise it will lapse into anarchy after next move.

Spring orders are also on file for E, F and G. The deadline for final Spring 1903 orders will be Saturday, August 17, 1985.

ANON.: Caruso, you filthy treaty-breaking scum....

JAMUL: Oh goody! Romance!

CASTERBRIDGE TO WORLD: Curious about how I decided my moves? Why, I just followed a simple formula. Hold piece three feet over Dip board; drop piece; order piece to that space in which it lands.

MATT THE OBSCURE TO JAMUL: Well, it beats my usual method!

JAMUL: Now, now, that's Hard(1)y a way to play a game. Think of the possibilities. Army Munich to Smyrna. Fleet Apulia to Iceland. Army Venice ~~Land~~ ~~on top of~~ supports Livonia to Prussia. Fleet Ankara to Toaster.

WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN: "The Packetship fleet sails again,
"It knows not where, it knows not when,
"To distant seas and distant shores -
"As long as we work these damn oars!"

LONDON TO JAMUL: Cartier deserves that.

JAMUL: Yes, I never did much like the drippy verse of Gerard Manley Cartier....

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THE KENNETH PEEL PAGE

I am, supposedly, pledged to avoid hobby feuding, but it looks like I've created my own. Teensy, to be sure; and, less a feud than a reciprocity of hurt feelings.

Let's see what we can salvage. With luck, maybe a friend....

A little background. Many years ago, the Diplomacy publishers got very upset over a rash of move-missers and dropouts. After a long and intensive exchange of letters and editorials, some solutions (admittedly limited) were concocted. First, we established the blacklist; any player dropping out of one game anywhere without notice would be expelled from all games run by all participating publishers. Then somebody came up with the NMR deposit. Now I see some people have an NMR fine system. It's all the same sort of thing; dropouts ruin games for all players, therefore let's exorcise them if we can.

I was fairly involved in the Blacklist Brigade, and I toyed briefly with NMR deposits too. Neither had a major effect; the blacklist was inconsistently applied, too few publishers coöperated, and in any case it is a fact that most people who start missing and dropping are in process of leaving the hobby; why should they care that other publishers don't want them, they aren't planning to apply anyway. As to the NMR deposit system, it may have deterred some 'iffy' types from signing up in the first place, but I question whether it ever prevented a dropout.

But - we publishers did try our little best to stem an epidemic. And, when faced with a recurrence of the old malady in COSTA's current incarnation, I fear I reacted in the old way; I got mad and lashed out.

Not the least of the matter was the identity of the perpetrator. Ken Peel had become a friend, a man to respect; he was fast elevating himself to fixture status in the hobby; and then he vanished. I knew from other sources that he hadn't left the hobby: He was involved in DIPLOMACY WORLD, his own POLITESSE was still regular - so why had he dumped on my games?! So I got mad; I was also, let's face it, a little hurt.

Well, of course, no sooner had the last issue of COSTA hit the stands, than things started to happen. Doug Brown wrote a letter of defense of his friend. Ken tried to call; I was out, but was given a message. Lu Henry wrote, concurring in part and dissenting in part, and getting me thinking. And finally, Ken called and got through, and we talked. Now I feel better, but he's hurt! And he has submitted a major letter for publication. It follows verbatim, i.e. I'm going to photocopy the original.

7/23/85

Kenneth Peel
8708 First Ave., #T-2
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Conrad:

From our conversation a couple of days ago on the phone, I understand that you had very strong statements against me, and sorts like me, for my NMRing out of my games in Costaguana. In no way can I excuse what happened, but I still object to many of the things I understand that you said.

First of all, excuse me for my lack of preciseness in response, as you never did me the courtesy of blasting me to my face. Yes, it is perfectly justified that I lost the balance of my sub fee with my cheshire from the games. Still, it seems a bit cowardly to say those things about me without letting me know. After we talked, I finally understood Doug Brown's odd statement to me in a recent letter about coming to my defense in Costaguana. If you did change your views from last issue, however, I don't need to see the 'zine. I feel bad enough already.

There really is no excuse for NMRing out of a game. I should have realized much sooner that I was physically unable to keep up with the games because of work pressures. I tried to keep going too long, and even though I did my best toward the end to resign, my best at that point just wasn't good enough. You are not always an easy person to get on the phone on the weekends.

But you raised a valid question in what I understand you said about me. If someone NMRs out of a game, is that person therefore necessarily irresponsible and should be balckballed from all future games? Perhaps one can genuinely take such an extreme position, but shouldn't it therefore also apply to anyone who impacts on a game in a similar way? What do you think about a publisher who has a history of glorious and dramatic crashes? How many Constaguanas have there been? C'mon, Conrad, we all gave you another chance, and rightfully so, I think. What about a publisher who doesn't come out for three months? Don't you think that effected the games? Far more, I submit, than my pitiful passage from the game. With your three month hiatus in publishing, most palyers just assumed that you were in the process of folding. Correspondence came to a virtual halt, and never really revived to its previous velocity, a situation paralleled by player interest. But during your three months delay due to temporary intervention by the real world, did we rush off to rehouse the games? Did we brandish warnings against you in hobby forums? No. We gave you the benefit of the doubt.

As I said, there is no excuse for NMRing out. I feel badly about all of the games that I am barely limping through right now. I am in the process of dropping down to one or two games. Let me try to explain what has been going on the past few months. (And lest anyone wonder, this is my first dip-related letter of any length

I don't know how long.)

In January, I received a promotion at the same time that a new staff aide was brought on by Congresswoman Snowe at the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Operations, where Mrs. Snowe was both a new member, and the new ranking Republican. Originally, my areas of responsibility were to be defense, trade, and a few select foreign policy issues.

The staff aide at the subcommittee, however, proved to be a disaster. As she proved less and less capable and knowledgeable of foreign affairs issues in general, I came to take on more and more responsibilities for issues that were stripped from her. By April, I was basically pulling 1½ people's worth of work. By June, it became apparent that one way or another, the staff aide at the Subcommittee would not be with us much longer. I started to get involved even in International Operations issues (I had already taken over all other areas of foreign affairs, including responsibility for the Subcommittee where Olympia was not ranking, the Arms Control Subcommittee, plus I was writing all constituent mail in foreign policy and defense issues). By June, the other aide was gone. But did they decide to hire someone else? No. They decided to "make do" until at least the August break, and possibly until September. So since June I have been handling about 2½ people's worth of work. (We need to hire someone half time just to handle the mail.)

I'm not really complaining, because although I have been working absolutely ridiculous hours (this last weekend I took my first break in three weeks from 12 hour days -- I got sick and took Saturday off), because I received two raises in that time for my work, and advanced rapidly in the office in terms of responsibility. I may even be hired for the Subcommittee staff position when they decide to fill it.

During the past four or five months, however, I kept thinking that the status quo was temporary, and that I would soon get back to working more regular hours. Just the opposite proved to be the case. I apologize for being the worst kind of drifty deadwood in games two and three in Costaguana. I deserve any Olsen-type sarcasm about those who don't write that I may receive. And you had better believe that I have developed not exactly the most sterling reputation in the games I have been in, by allies (most of them now former) and opponents alike. That, undoubtedly, is something that will remain with me, even when my personal private agenda improves. But blackball me from Dipdom? That would be something I would consider to be a spiteful suggestion from a small-minded person. Not the sort of thing I would expect from someone like you, Conrad.

Best,
/6

Hi, again; it's Conrad. Ken's reference to not sending him a copy of my writings about him simply reflects the fact that, when someone drops out, I drop them from the sub list. My feeling is, why should I spend twenty-two cents on a dropout? If he cared enough to read the editorial commentary on his actions, he'd have stuck around or resigned and prevented the matter in the first place.

However. Ken writes quite a letter, eh? (Note: I had originally intended to print Lu's and Doug's letters on the same subject; in fact, I had them all typed when Ken's arrived. I think you'll see why it no longer makes sense to use them.) Allowing for differences in detail, it's the sort of letter I could have written a dozen times. It says a bit for Ken, and not too much for me, that he did write it; I never managed.

There's something about Diplomacy - maybe it's true of all hobbies - that encourages overcommitment. It happens to lots of us, and to some of us more than once. It is so natural a phenomenon that perhaps the only decent attitude anybody can have about a dropout is that it's his life, and his privilege, and who are we - especially we who have sinned in our own day - to revile?

It is also human nature to presume that all problems are temporary and short-term. To deal with Ken's example, when one's employment suddenly dumps 12-hour days on one, it is logical to presume that this is not going to continue for long. A week, maybe two....okay, so it's been two months now, it has to have an end! So why bother to notify people of a situation that will be over by the time the letter gets there?....

I've been there. In my case, it lasted for almost three years...but each month was the last, I thought. And on it dragged....

You have to concede, Ken, that you're unusual. Okay, you dropped out of a game; all by itself, big deal. You broke the pattern, however, when you came back at me and defended yourself, and have - for my money - conclusively shown that not all dropouts are caused by lack of responsibility to the hobby.

I am reminded at this point of an unrelated anecdote. About a year ago, I had an employee who was an utter disaster. He was slow; he was inaccurate; he was unreliable...and I, after failing to resolve the problems privately, started the formal processes to correct things or get rid of him.

Then he went on vacation. And on the day he was due back, he failed to arrive; no call, no nothing. I fumed. I grumbled. And after about two hours I suddenly brightened; THIS WAS IT! The sonofabitch was AWOL; with his back-ground, I had enough to can him! As I told my supervisors at the time, "The only way he can beat this one is if he's dead!"

Well, of course, he was....

Perhaps I have learned something from the Ken Peel Episode. No matter what steps we publishers take, dropouts will happen. Most may be sleaze-balls, but a fair number will not be; they will instead be solid hobby members who have run into problems, and have lost track of the calendar in trying to make resolution. Or, they might be dead....

Steve Allen tells a story of a live performance he once gave, at which the audience was unusually responsive - except for one man in the front row who never clapped at anything. And, as Allen tells it, even as he was bringing down the house on every routine, this one holdout began to bother him. So at one particular high point, Allen strode to the footlights fully intending to make a public mention of the man's failure. And suddenly he looked at the fellow, and noticed; the man was a double amputee.

Did I digress? I think my point is that maybe, just maybe, the real answer to the dropout problem is to quit worrying about it, accept it as an inherent factor in a highly transtory hobby, and spend the energy thus freed up in better pursuits.

Ken's right. He and many others have given me the benefit of the doubt, more than once; who am I to deny the same to him?

I think from this point I shall free up some energy. On behalf of your fellow players, please; if you have to leave, try to tell someone. If you don't, naturally I shall replace you and stop sending you the magazine. But let's just leave it at that, eh what?

xx xx

THE JOHN CARUSO LETTER

"You are misinterpreting my disagreement with your 'general orders.' It's not whom you call; it's the idea that some unknown person, whom no one can negotiate with, can write any orders he chooses to, within guidelines that are arbitrarily agreed to by the G.M. The G.M.'s purpose in a game is to adjudicate moves, not interpret 'general orders' and decide if a stand-in writer followed the original player's guides.

"I also find your notion that a player can negotiate with the original player to influence his 'general orders,' a farce. There is no way of telling what the stand-in will write. Rather than support an ally, he could support himself (which is logical), and the ally could lose a center because of it even though the original player may have supported the ally. There is no way a player can negotiate for that turn's moves with that player, once the orders are in, and if an original player has time to change his general orders for that turn, he could just as easily write his own orders.

"This also goes farther than negotiation. A player could mistakenly mis-order his units. General orders prevent this, and if your hand-chosen stand-in misorders, will the disorder stand? Should it stand? After all, the player gave general orders, he assumed they'd be written correctly.

"There is just no practical way your stand-in could accurately execute moves similar to my general orders. Sure he could go through the motions, but even then, he could hurt my position. What if I'm doing well, on my way to a 2-way draw; I submit guides, your stand-in follows my guides, my ally doesn't stab me - but your stand-in's moves are weak and my position gets ruined.

"I personally think G.M.s should stick to the adjudicating part of the game, and the players should stick to writing orders. Players could send in conditional orders a turn in advance; be on a collect call list; or the G.M. can allow a temporary, named standby.

"Also many G.M.s allow conditional orders from players based on who the player is. How can you possibly comply with this when no one knows who the standby is? I'm sorry, but I disagree with your general orders rule 100% and feel it makes a game irregular."

CONRAD'S TURN: I cannot escape the feeling that we're making a mountain out of a molehill here. I've already stated, last issue, that I agree the G.M. ought not to be deciding whether a set of moves meets the 'general orders' guidelines or not, and I shall withdraw my statement that I will enforce that point. Beyond that, while everything you say is theoretically possible, it seems fairly unimportant to me.

The whole 'general orders' system is based on the supposition that some orders are generally better than no orders. This is, of course, an arguable thesis. I happen to think it's true; if someone else disagrees, the obvious solution is, don't submit general orders for yourself.

Now that I've withdrawn from enforcing adherence to the letter of the general orders by the stand-in, it's absolutely true that the stand-in can do absolutely anything at all, including the exact opposite of the sealed instructions. So what? I cannot imagine anyone actually doing such a thing. What possible reason would they have? Remember, I am using people who are not playing in my games; who probably will never play in my games, and in any case certainly never in any game in which they stand in this way; and who are being handed a game set-up and an envelope. It is highly unlikely that such people will have the faintest idea who the players are (not many people pay close attention to games they're not actually in). As far as the possibility that they could find out who's who, and use the opportunity to settle a grudge - well, sure they could. But somehow I think I'm capable of asking people whom I can trust not to do this kind of idiotic thing. These are friends who are being asked, in effect, to do me a favor; and, while you may have no faith, I do. So, while all your points in this regard are theoretically possibilities, are they reasonable? I suggest not.

It seems to me that the 'general orders' system is really one in which the original player continues through a surrogate. If I'm right (and I think I am - and I might note that past experience is in my favor), there will never be a case in which the spirit of the general orders is violated. And thus I stand my ground that to negotiate with the surrogate is simply to negotiate with the player of record. If you develop an alliance and the real player actually plans to adhere to it, this will be reflected inside the envelope. True, you can't get much going in one season; you're right that if you could influence someone to change their sealed envelope, you could just as well get them to send in moves in the first place. So do that! To hell with sealed envelopes; negotiate with the player! Convince him to change his alliances, and if he proposes to use sealed orders, he'll change them too.

The only real purpose to the sealed orders system is to cover players against a missed move in an emergency or special situation. In 1972, I was playing in roughly 25 games. On September 1st of that year - one of the more memorable days in my life - a couple of momentous events occurred: My father died in the morning, and my wife left me in the afternoon. As you might suspect, my 25 games suddenly lost all importance for a while. And sure enough, when the next results came out, I'd missed moves in about 15 of them. In a few, I had already submitted advance orders, or we were in a season where I had nothing to do. But in five or six games, I was saved by 'sealed orders' on file, and I sincerely credit those sealed orders with giving me one win and one draw.

And what if, as you suggest, the standby writes lousy orders? Well, the first thing you can do to prevent this is send your own. Failing that, I fall back on my original premise: Some orders, even if not as brilliantly conceived as yours, are better than none.

Perhaps one modification would be useful: Would it make any difference if I were to list, game-by-game, those players who have 'general orders' on file? Then at least you'd know where you stood....

And finally, you consider this system cause to declare the games irregular? Maybe in 1985; I have no way of knowing. But I doubt it. I do know that, about ten years ago, the same question came up, and the ruling (by the then-Boardman Number Custodian, Rod Walker) was that there was no irregularity.

THE KATHLEEN WOLSIFFER PAGE: From philatelic editor to free-lance writer to film critic? That's the progression I've seen for one of my dearest friends, who provided the following critiques of major box-office smashes:

Suggested Films for an Evening of Fun for Family
and Friends -- A Potpourri of Delights
to Thrill and Educate Everyone!!!!

- **Fire Making (PSUPCR)** 1965 7 min. b/w
10907 rental \$8.50 sale \$95.00
Minma's son, Burunjaru rubs edge of his spear-thrower across a wooden log, igniting dried kangaroo dung placed in a crack in the log. From the People of the Australian Western Desert series. Also available for sale on videocassette: \$90.00.

Parental discretion advised due to sustained high pitch of action maintained in this film, could result in hyperactivity in susceptible children.

(subtitle: "This is the Day We Wash the Kids")
Some violence (native cleaning methods include gentle beating on rocks at riverside)

- **A Father Washes His Children (PSUPCR)**
1975 13 min. color 22724 rental \$10.50 sale \$135.00
Dedeheiwa, a shaman and headman in his Yanomamö village, takes nine of his young children to the river and washes them carefully and patiently. Directed by T. Asch and N. Chagnon. From the Yanomamö series.

- **Tapir Distribution (DER)** 1975 15 min.
color 21769 rental \$13.50 sale \$240.00
Prominent Yanomamö headman kills a tapir and presents it to his brothers-in-law, who comprise important political bloc in the village. Gift serves to reinforce shaken alliance. Preparation and distribution of meat along dominance and kinship lines. See also *Meat Fight* for cross-cultural comparisons. Directed by N. Chagnon and T. Asch. From the Yanomamö series.

Not recommended for children under the age of 8 with aspirations toward raising tapirs as pets

Good opportunities for lively group discussion after viewing, as many questions are left open: would the problem have arisen if bananas had been at stake rather than plantains? If you were marooned on an island, would you rather have a club, a machete, or an ax? etc., etc.
Especially after this ax fight

- **Ax Fight (DER)** 1975 30 min. color 32016
rental \$21.50 sale \$480.00
Tensions are high in a large Yanomamö village when a group of visitors from another village refuse to work and demand to be fed. A violent outburst occurs when a woman refuses to share plantains with one of the men visitors, and he beats her with a stick. Her brother retaliates and several men end up fighting with clubs, machetes, and axes. Begins with an unedited record of the event, then a slow-motion replay during which the combatants are identified and their behavior explained. Next an anthropologist explains kinship structure of fight and cleavages in local descent groups in the village. Last section is edited version of the fight illustrating how strongly intellectual models influence visual perception. Directed by T. Asch and N. Chagnon. From the Yanomamö series.

AUSTRIA (Robson): Removes a boh, a sil, f tus. Has: a's gal, bud, pie, tyo (4).
ENGLAND (Pustilnik): Builds a edi, a lon, f lvp. Has: a's stp, mun, kie, ber,
edi, lon; f's lvp, eng, bal, bel, nat, hol (12).
FRANCE (Johnston): Removes a mar, f lyc. Has: a's ruh, bur; f's wes, spa sc,
mid (5).
ITALY (c.d.): Has: f tun (1).
TURKEY (Walters): Builds a ank, a con, f smy. Has: a's ser, war, rum, mos,
ank, con; f's smy, rom, bla, tyn, ion (11 - 1 short).

/ /

AUSTRIA (Quinn): a con-smy. a gal (s) vie-bud. a vie-bud. f bul sc (s) ITA
ion-aeg.
FRANCE (Bakken?): NMR. a's bel. par, pic, mar, bre; f's nth, lon, eng, spa sc (h).
GERMANY (Menders): a ruh (s) hol-bel. a hol-bel. a mun-bur. f nwg-nat.
ITALY (Caruso): a tri-(s) apu-alb. a apu-alb. a ven (s) tri. f adr (c) apu-
alb. f gre (s) AUS bul. f bla-ank. f ion-aeg.
RUSSIA (Gorham): a ser-tri. a rum (s) bud-gal. a war-ukr. a bud-gal. a den (h).
a nwy (h). a arm-smy. a pru-war. a sev (s) rum. f ska-nth.

French standby moves are asked from Lu Henry, 6056 Waverly, Dearborn Hts., MI 48127-3227. Other players' addresses were in last issue, Lu. Oh, and... moves may certainly be conditional on who is playing the country.

GERMANY TO FRANCE: You have me outnumbered and out-positioned. But hopefully I will be left alone to deal with you myself!

[illegible]

"I saw Castora, Pelz and Alderson the last time I played cards (Feb. 1981). Bruce Pelz and I were as healthy as ever (the good die young). I commented to him, "You and I will still have to look at each other across the card tables for another hundred years." He exploded, "Yes, but I have one advantage!" and threw his eyeglasses to the floor and ground the lenses with his bootheel.

And so the history goes.

Steve/Dan - be well. The rest of you - see you next time.